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Research Articles

Alessandro Capone, University of Salerno

The Nation at the Barricades. Political Imaginary, Insurrectional Techniques, and Cultures of War between Paris and Rome in 1849

This article deals with the military and political usages of the barricades during the 1849 defence of republican Rome against the French army. By using a vast array of sources, including visual and material ones, the article analyses the political imaginary underpinning the construction of barricades in Rome and underscores its links with both the French events of 1848 and the revolutionary and counterrevolutionary cultures since the 1830s. The article thus shows how barricades were instrumental in defining collective political identities. In the republican field, they became a symbol of the connection between the nation, democracy, civil mobilisation, and warfare. In the counterrevolutionary field, barricades helped construing the image of the enemy as a transnational, professional, and barbarous one.

Keywords: Social Imaginary; 1848 Revolutions; Insurrection; Warfare; Barricades

Chiara Santarnecchi, University of Pisa Tales from the East. Memoirs and Imaginaries from the Piedmontese Expeditionary Corps to Crimea

The Crimean War is one of the pivotal episodes of the Italian Risorgimento, politically, militarily, and culturally. Officers and soldiers of the Kingdom of Sardinia were confronted with an unusual conflict. Thousands of kilometres away from home, they fought a war of waiting and epidemics, alongside the great European armies. At the centre of the public debate of the time, the war represented an important international stage for the Sardinian army to show its valour. By analysing a corpus of memoirs published by officers, this article analyses their point of view, thus focusing on their role in the construction of the memory of the Crimean War in 19th century Italy.

Keywords: Crimean War; Sardinian Army; Warfare Experience; Military Culture; Memoirs

Salvatore Santuccio, Società siracusana di Storia patria The Revolution, the Nation, and Brigandage. Resistance to conscription and State-Building in Sicily after the Italian Unification

This article reads conscription and banditry in post-Unification Sicily in the light of the broader political and social processes of the Italian nation - and state-bulding. Through the analysis of the case of the province of Syracuse, the study reconstructs the social tensions and local criminal dynamics, placing them in the logic of the internal political conflict within the provincial elites around the administrative reorganisation of the island after unification. In this perspective, the article proposes a comparison between the action of political and social criminal groups and the politicised armed struggle in the continental Mezzogiorno.

Keywords: Conscription; Crime; Political Conflict; State-Building; Sicily

Sources

Giuseppe Perelli, Scuola Normale Superiore, Pisa The Voice of Words. Political Catechisms, Writing, and Orality in the Long 1848

This article presents the first results of an ongoing research on the dialogues and political catechisms published in Italian in Tuscany and the Roman State during the revolutions of 1848-49. The analysis of these texts pays particular attention to the dimension of orality, understood in two senses: firstly, the imitation and incorporation of oral communication practices in the written text; then the public reading of the texts and their reception. The practice of public reading is studied by focusing on speakers, spaces of social interaction and the relationship between performance and audience, including the latter's expectations and reactions.

Keywords: Catechism; Political Education; Revolution; Orality; Writing